Illustrated Catalogue

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ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE.

May-October 1888.

Illustrated Catalogue

OF

Alberto Grubicy's

Picture Gallery

IN THE

ITALIAN EXHIBITION

IN LONDON

with a Preface and Biographical Notes

BY

" VITTORE „

Art-critic of the *Riforma*, of Rome.

And 20 Zincotypes and 25 Phototypes
printed separately

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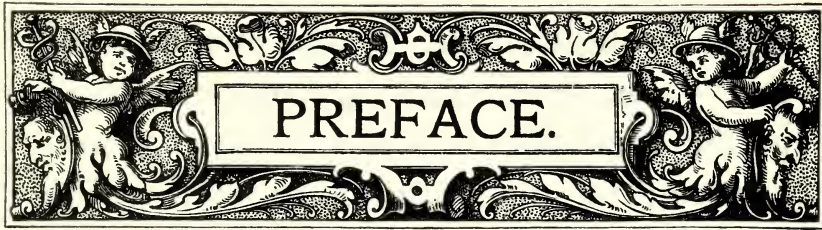
1888.

Ad ALBERTO PISANI-DOSSI
Elettissimo amante dell'Arte
questo primo tentativo
" **PRATICO** "
frutto di deboli forze, ma di grande amore
dedica
" VITTORE ".

PREFACE.

THE great number of worthy persons who for casual motives, for the sake of fashion, or with a view to gain, have, during the last thirty years, taken to study painting and adopted it as a profession, has produced such an inundation of framed canvas of every kind and manner, that, in consequence, the artistic feeling of the general public has become deplorably confused, if not even almost utterly destroyed.

The ability, the cunning, the full command of pictorial expression, instead of being considered simply as progressive

steps brought about by the evolution of Art — so as to attain greater clearness in the rendering of ideas — were misunderstood by many and considered as the final scope of Art. Hence the endless quantity of pictures that show nothing else in their authors but the aptitude and capacity of expression. Kaligraphic, grammatical, rhetorical essays, but no ideas no feeling, no life.

Art-exhibitions, in general, have only helped to increase the confusion; any one just able to paint decently — and such handlers of the brush are legion — is hung. The walls of the rooms, however large and numerous, are covered up to the ceiling; the public walks through listlessly, tired and bored, passing by with indifference, even such works which, though bearing the impress of the sacred fire, yet have not been able to make the worn-out gallery-visitor pause and force him to fathom, through the silent language of the canvas, the cogitation of the mind which has created that work.

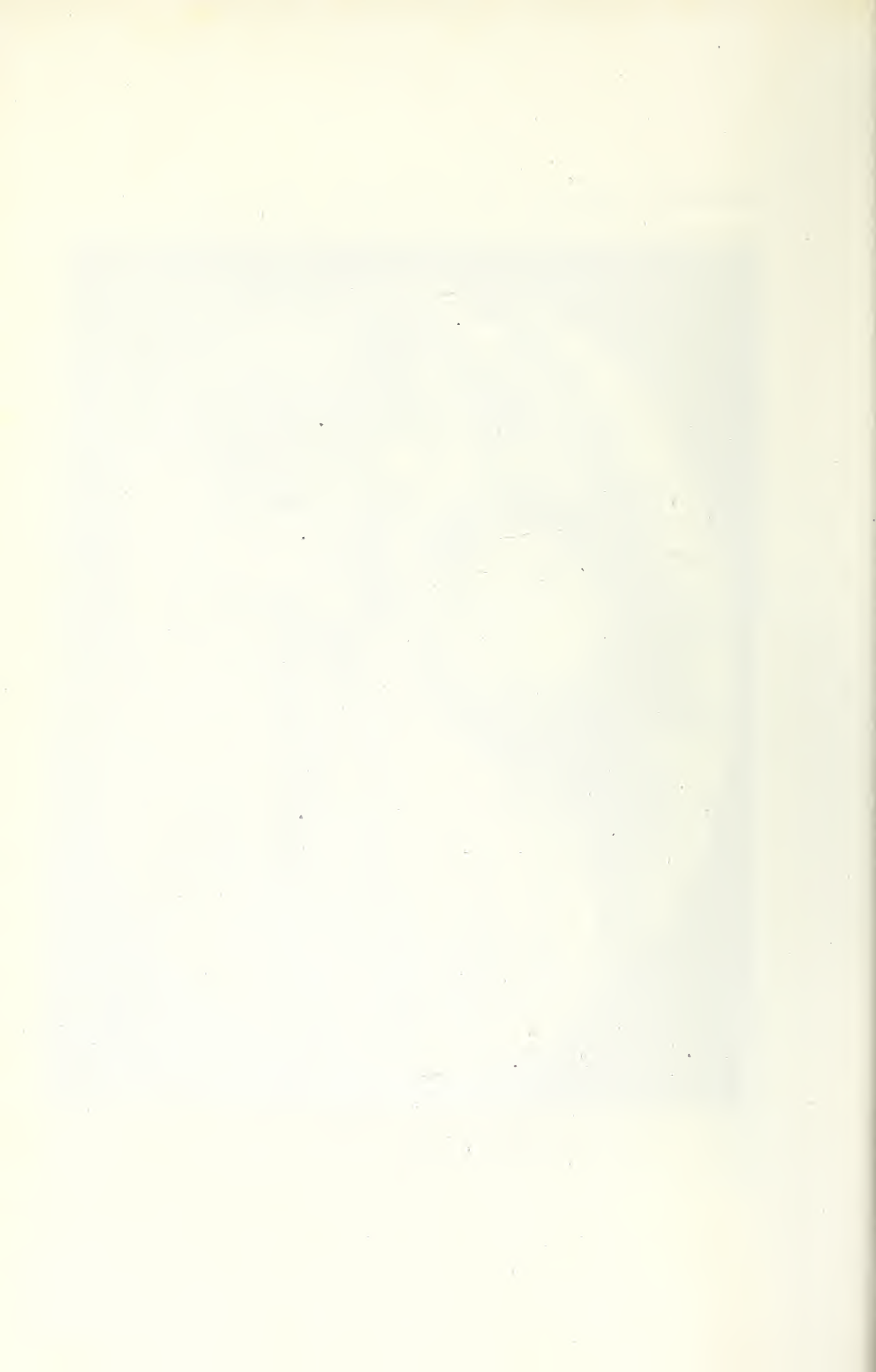
On the contrary, by showing collectively a certain number of paintings by one and the same artist — if he be worthy of the name — even the most indifferent visitor is compelled to stop and notice the continuity of idea in the one mind, through its various productions, thus making, as it were, a psychological acquaintance with the author of the works before his eyes. From this step we are not far removed from the feeling of interest in each single work, which procures us true artistic enjoyment; and when this has been arrived at, the aim of Art is attained.

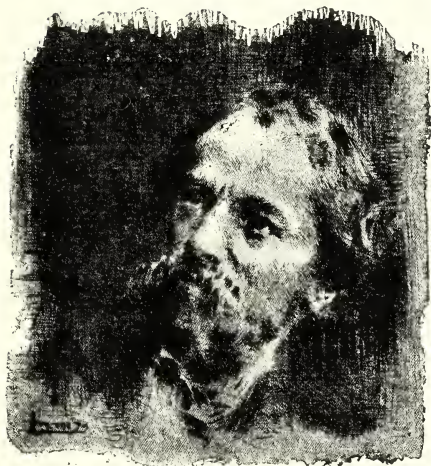
Impelled by this conviction, and after having in vain done battle in the Press, in order to bring about in Public Art Exhibitions a reform in accordance with the idea expressed above, I have succeeded in making a fervent and willing proselyte of Signor Alberto Grubicy, a *dilettante* and picture dealer in Milan, who has devoted himself to collecting a certain number of pictures which might

give the visitors to the Italian Exibition in London, the opportunity of appreciating at least some of our best artists with sufficient proofs before them.

It is to be hoped that Signor Grubicy's courageous example may be followed by others, so that, little by little, those, for whom Art has been a very religion, may appear in their true light, be elevated to their proper post and be, with reverence, separated from the invading crowd of workmen of the brush.

« VITTORE. »

T. CREMONA - *A Mother's Love.*

TRANQUILLO CREMONA.

1836-1878.

To be able to appreciate justly the profound trace left by the genius of Tranquillo Cremona in the Art of his country, it would be necessary to know how deplorable was the condition of the artistic atmosphere in which his development took place.

A few brumagem celebrities had made a monopoly of Art: they had, so to say, taken possession of Art, broken her bones, deprived her of her muscles, and sucked her blood. Everything was false and conventional. Childish in the conceptions, mannered in the execution, Art consisted simply in the

patient, monkish study of the model, bit of furniture, piece of stuff, or other object copied. The greater or lesser ability of the brush in painting smoothly, polishing and varnishing well, formed an easy graduation of geniuses who mutually incensed one another.

Cremona came in his youth from Venice, fascinated by the glow of the Venetian colourists, enamoured with the powerful vitality of the works of a Tintoretto, a Carpaccio, a Gian Bellini, and almost at once began a mortal struggle against the false art which dominated in Milan — a struggle which ceased, only after his death.

Cremona went on, combated and insulted, leading a life of serene bohemianism and misery, supported gaily in the midst of a circle of friends who idolized him; working as much as fourteen hours a-day, doggedly pursuing the most delicate and indiscernible psychological feelings which his poet's soul knew how to read in human passions. Maternity, Infancy and Love were the three songs to which he preferred to tune his exquisite lyre.

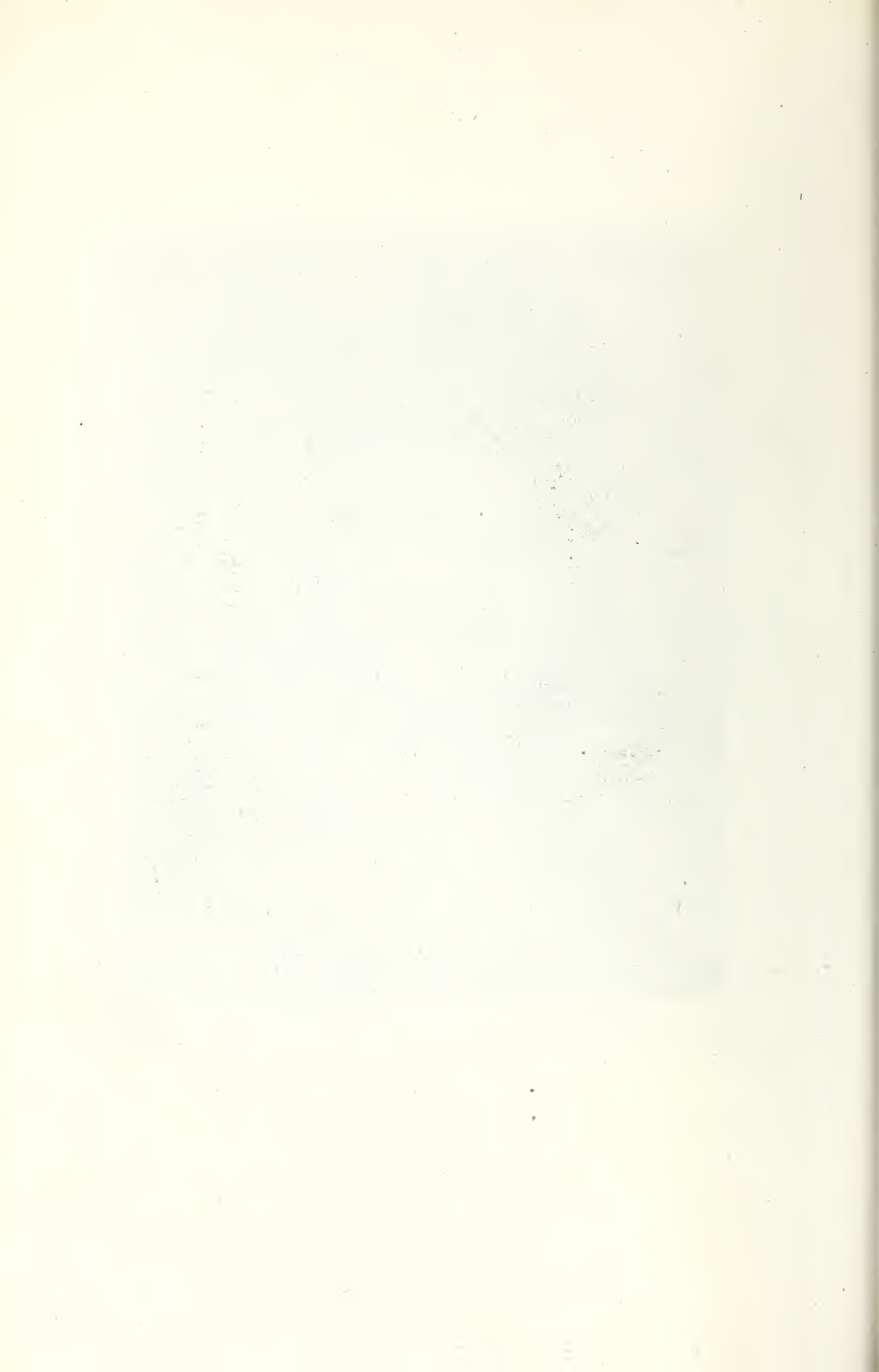
His works, full of beauty and truth, universally understood and admired, soon made a triumphal tour of all Europe, reproduced as they were by the then recent invention of oleography. *The Two Cousins, Silent Love, A Mother's Love, A Visit to the Tomb of Romeo and Juliet, The Falconer*, imported copyright into England as far back as 1868 by the intelligent publishers, Mess.rs Sampson, Lowe & Co., perhaps still form the charm of many a home in the United Kingdom.

But the original works of this genial artist could

find no buyers except among his friends, because he had had the courage to rebel in the treatment of brush and colours, against the lessons of the Professors, and had adopted an artistic expression of his *own*, which had never formerly been used.

However unpleasant it may be for my own country, I must admit, for the sake of truth, that the first intelligently generous *amateur* who presented himself to appreciate with passion and enter into the spirit of Cremona's works, was an Englishman, M.r James States Forbes, who is the proprietor of some of the finest pictures of the lamented master.

Cremona died in 1878 at the age of forty-two. He worked assiduously, but the works brought forth are few, as he would spend two and three years in painting the same canvas over again, without being able to make up his mind and leave it.

From the time when he initiated his *personal* manner his whole artistic patrimony consists of about a dozen pictures, 25 portraits and some fifty water-colours and drawings; not one of these works exists in the public Galleries of Italy; to this reprobate the honour of admission was never granted, not even in consideration of the interest his work might have for the History of Art!

T. CREMONA - The Love-child.

T. CREMONA

Phidias' Leda.

High Life (a water-colour).

CATALOGUE.

The Copyright of each work is reserved by the proprietor, Signor ALBERTO GRUBICY, *to whom all applications for reproductions must be made.*

T. CREMONA.

A Mother's Love, an oil-painting.

The Love-child, an oil-painting,
lent by the Chev. LUIGI DELLA BEFFA.

Smiles, an oil-painting,
lent by the Chev. LUIGI DELLA BEFFA.

High life, a water-colour,
lent by JAMES STATES FORBES ESQ.[re]

Le Page boudeur, a water-colour,
lent by Signor FEDELE BORGHI.

SEGANTINI - *The* Avæ Maria. (Lake of Pusiano).

G. SEGANTINI.

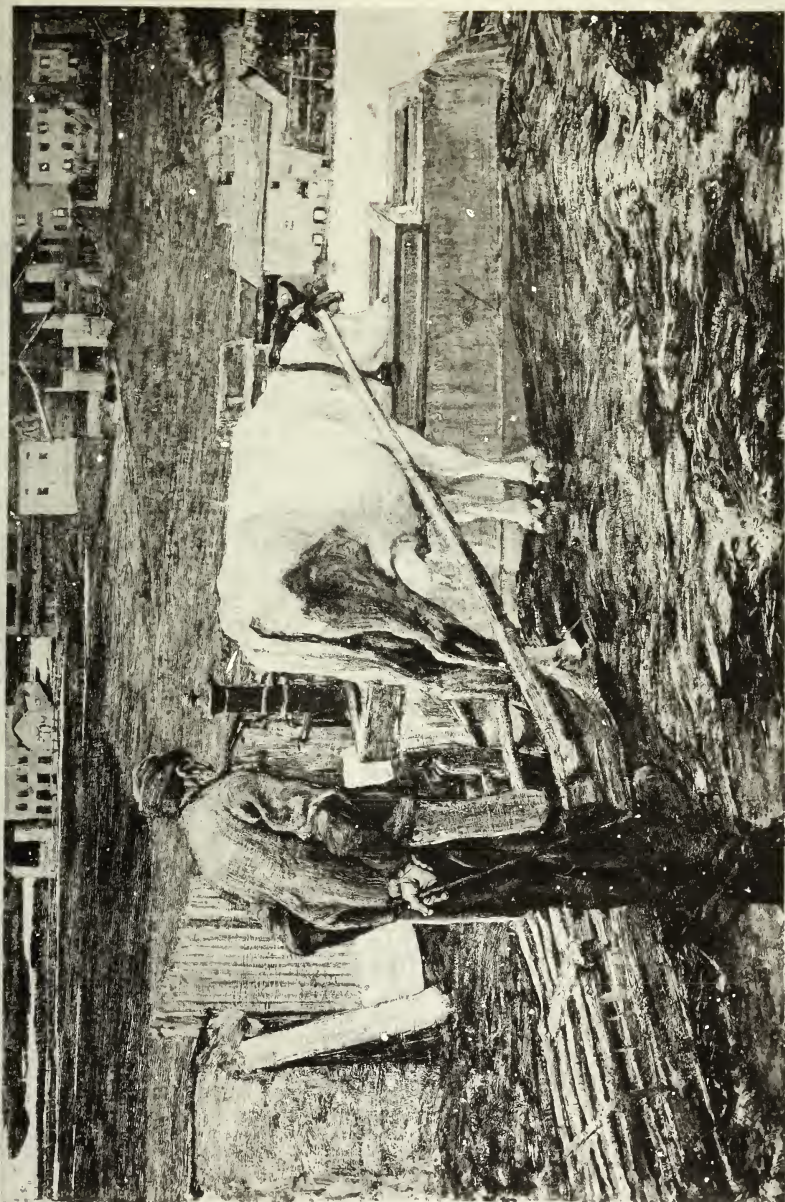
This artist is still young (he was born in 1858, at Arco in the Tyrol) and has had a most adventuresome life — various interesting episodes of which have already been told us by brilliant Italian writers.

The brotherly intimacy and regard which have bound me to him since the beginning of his artistic career, induce me to keep a delicate reserve as to his early years, and make me prefer that the public should occupy itself, at present, only with his works, which claim notice in no inconsiderable number.

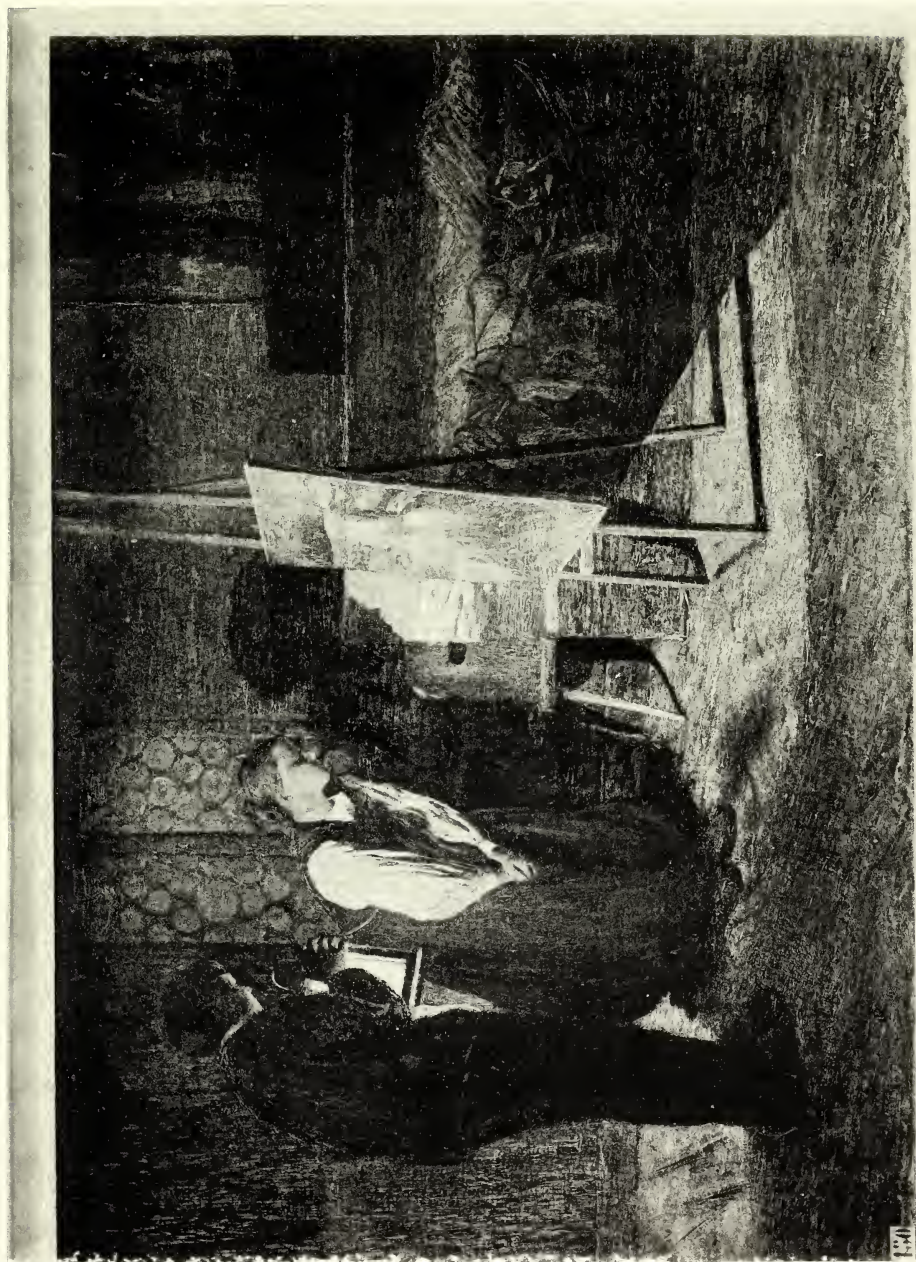
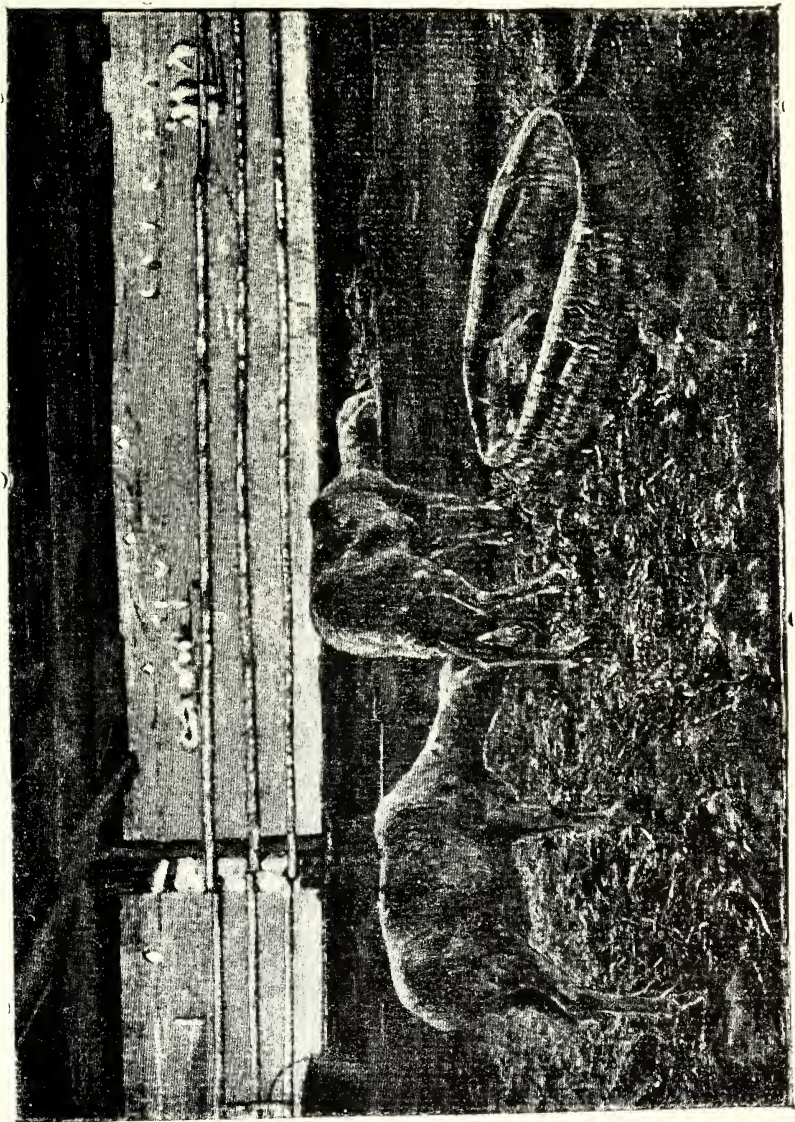
I will only mention one fact which may interest Art-

students, and that is, that Segantini up to this day has never left Milan, the Italian Alps, or the neighbouring Swiss Mountains — where he now dwells — except to go once to Turin and once, last year, to Venice; he has thus been unable hitherto to acquaint himself with any of the master-pieces of Foreign Art, unless it be through the medium of the mechanical reproductions in art-periodicals or similar means.

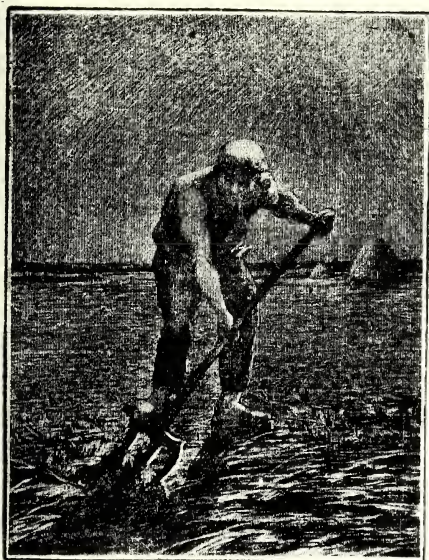
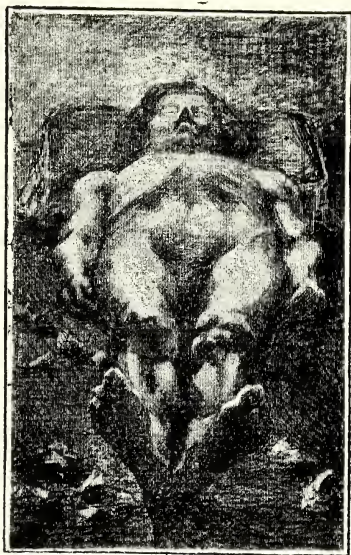
He leads a secluded existence with his wife and four children; his works are, moreover, the true narrative of his life and the expression of his soul.

SEGANTINI - *Ploughing.*

SEGANTINI - *Twilight.*

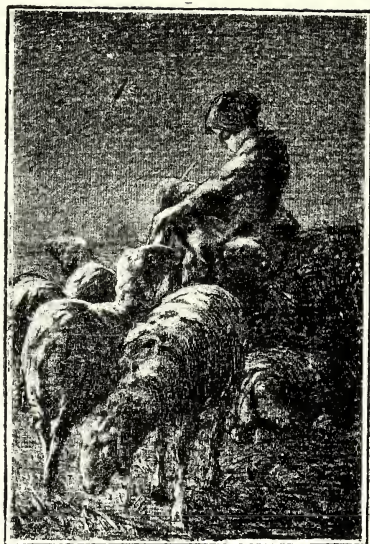
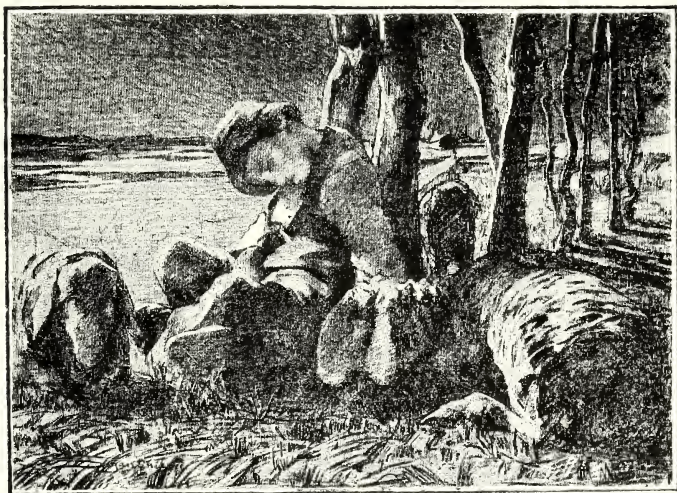
SEGANTINI - *Winter at Savognin Canton Grisons.*

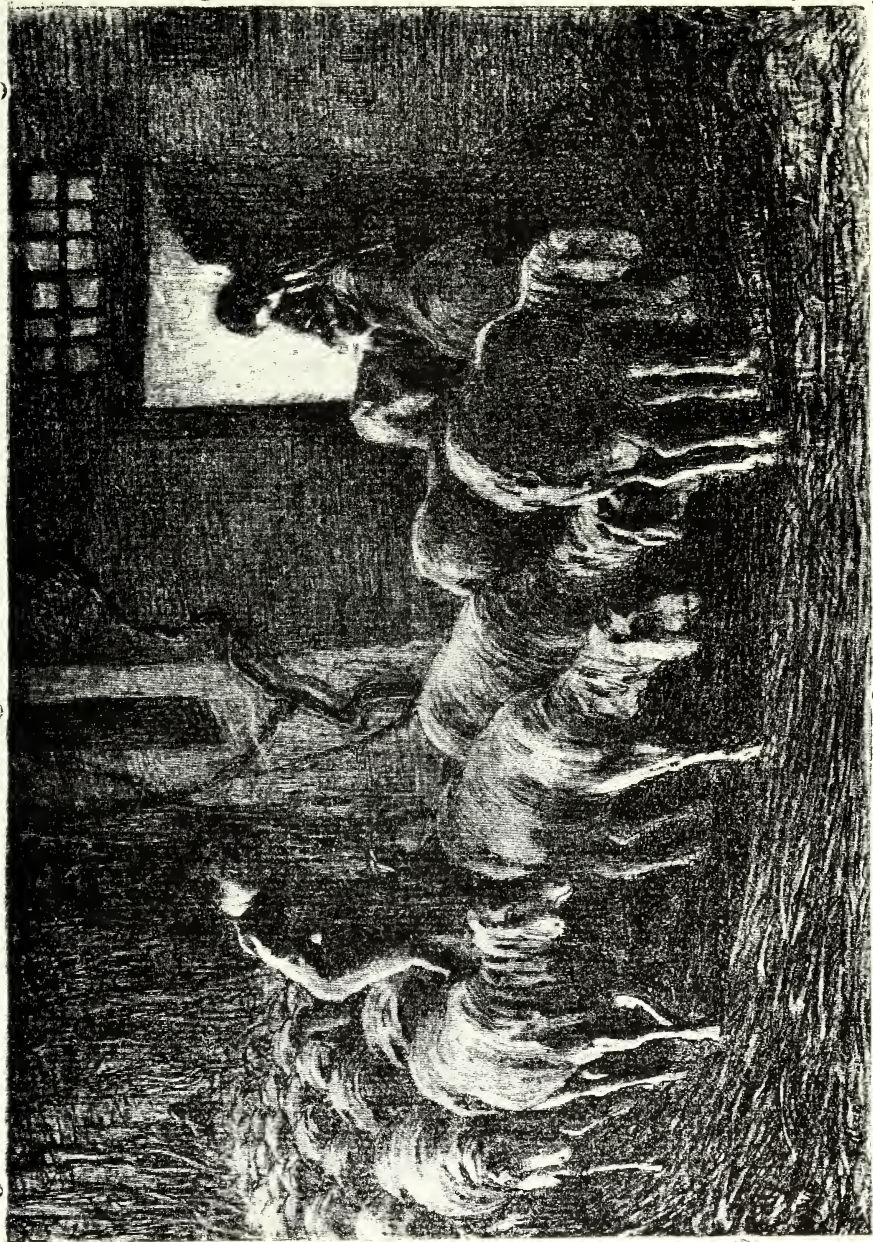
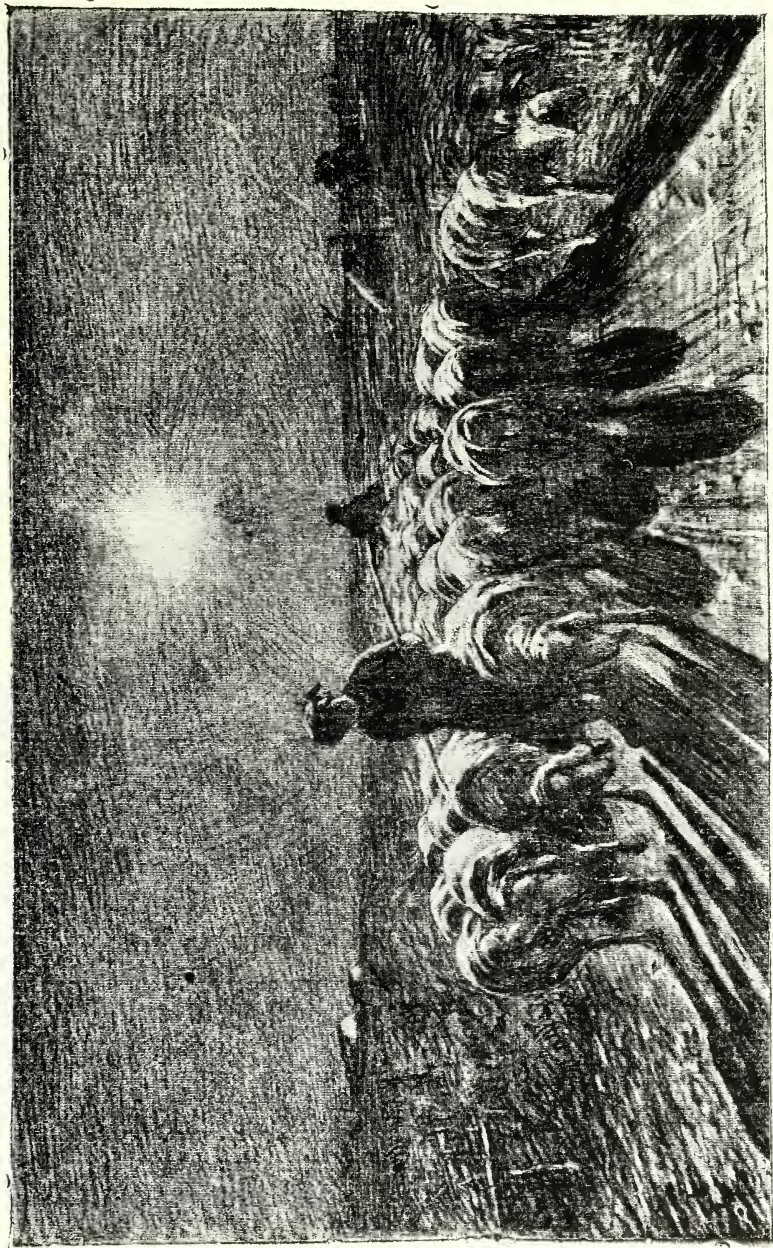
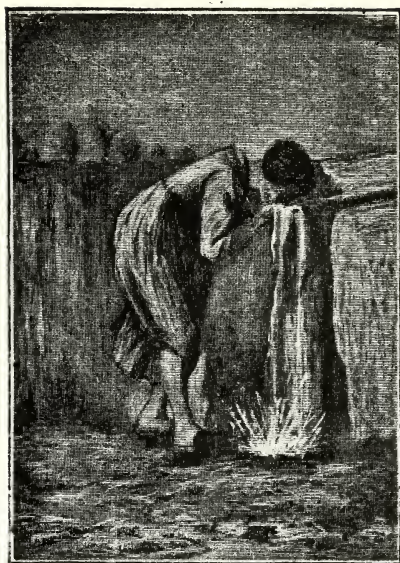
SEGANTINI - The Drinking Trough

SEGANTINI - *My Models* (Scene by lanterne light)

G. SEGANTINI

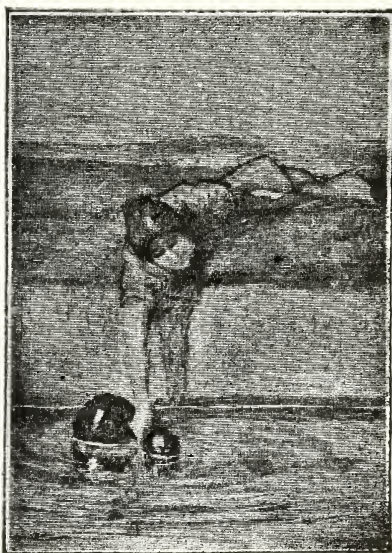
Contrast of Light (a sketch).

G. SEGANTINI

1. LABOURER (a drawing).

2. A HERO (a drawing).

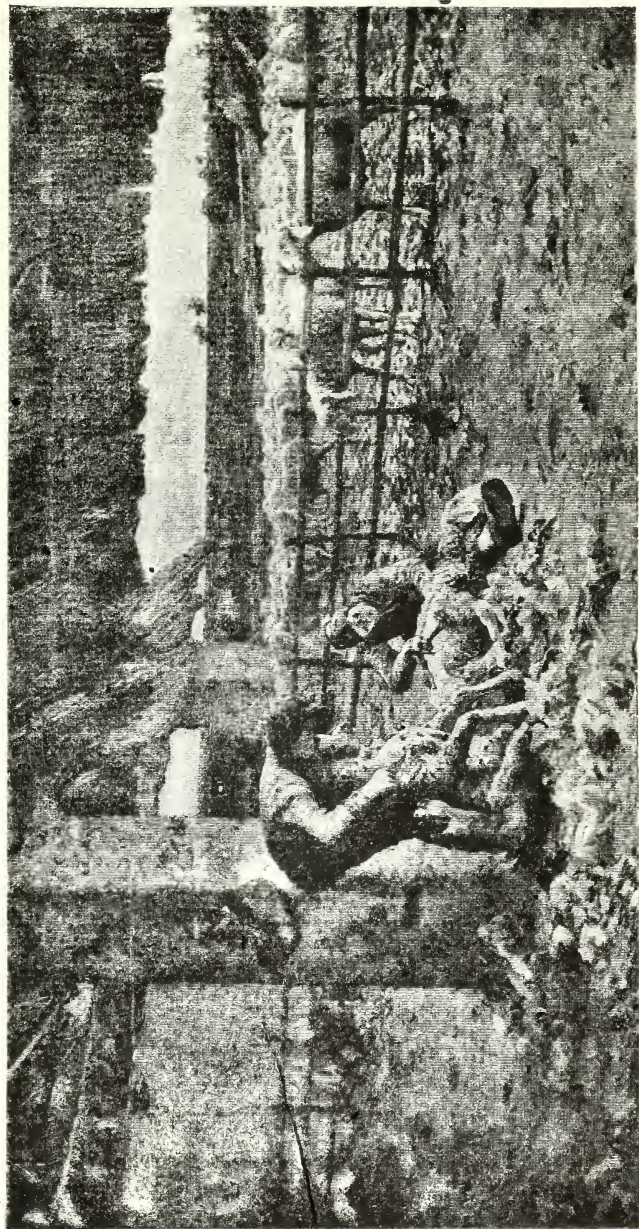
3. AUTUMN (a drawing).

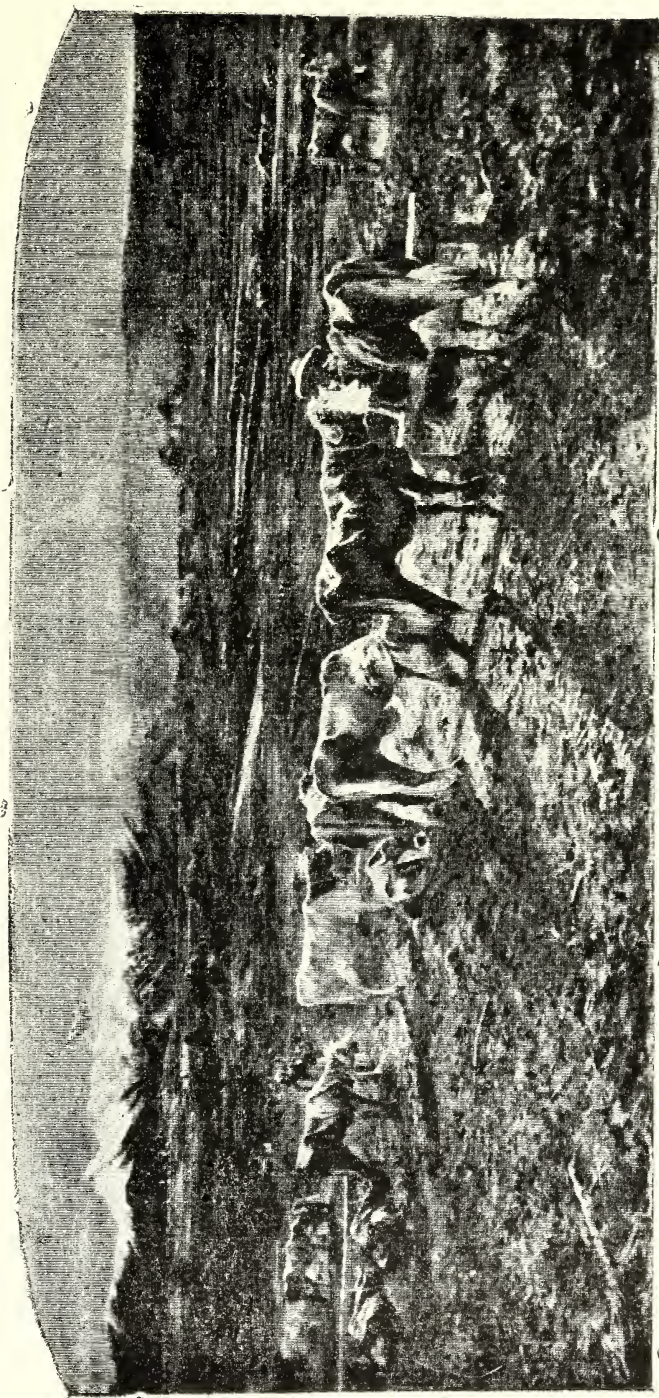
4. PIFFERARO (a drawing).

5. SHEPHERDESS (a drawing).

6. NOON (a drawing).

G. SEGANTINI

Return to the Fold (a drawing).

Herd Moving (a drawing).

7. AT THE SPRING (a pastel).

8. DRAWING WATER (a pastel).

9. GIRL AT THE FOUNTAIN (a pastel).

May (a water-colour drawing).

G. SEGANTINI

Shearing (a drawing).

G. SEGANTINI

At the Tether (a drawing).

CATALOGUE.

G. SEGANTINI.

Oil-paintings.

Mushrooms.

Vegetables.

Autumn Sun (at Savognin, Canton Grisons).

Ave Maria (Lake of Pusiano).

Ploughing (a Landscape in the Canton Grisons).

Twilight.

Winter (at Savognin, Canton Grisons).

The Drinking Trough.

My Models (a Scene by Lantern Light).

Contrast of Light (a sketch).

Drawings & pastels.

Autumn (a drawing).

Pifferaro (a sketch).

Labourer.

The turn to the Fold (a drawing).

Herd moving — Moonlight (a drawing).

Noon (a drawing).

At the Spring (a pastel).

Girl at the Fountain (a pastel).

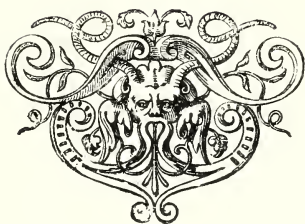
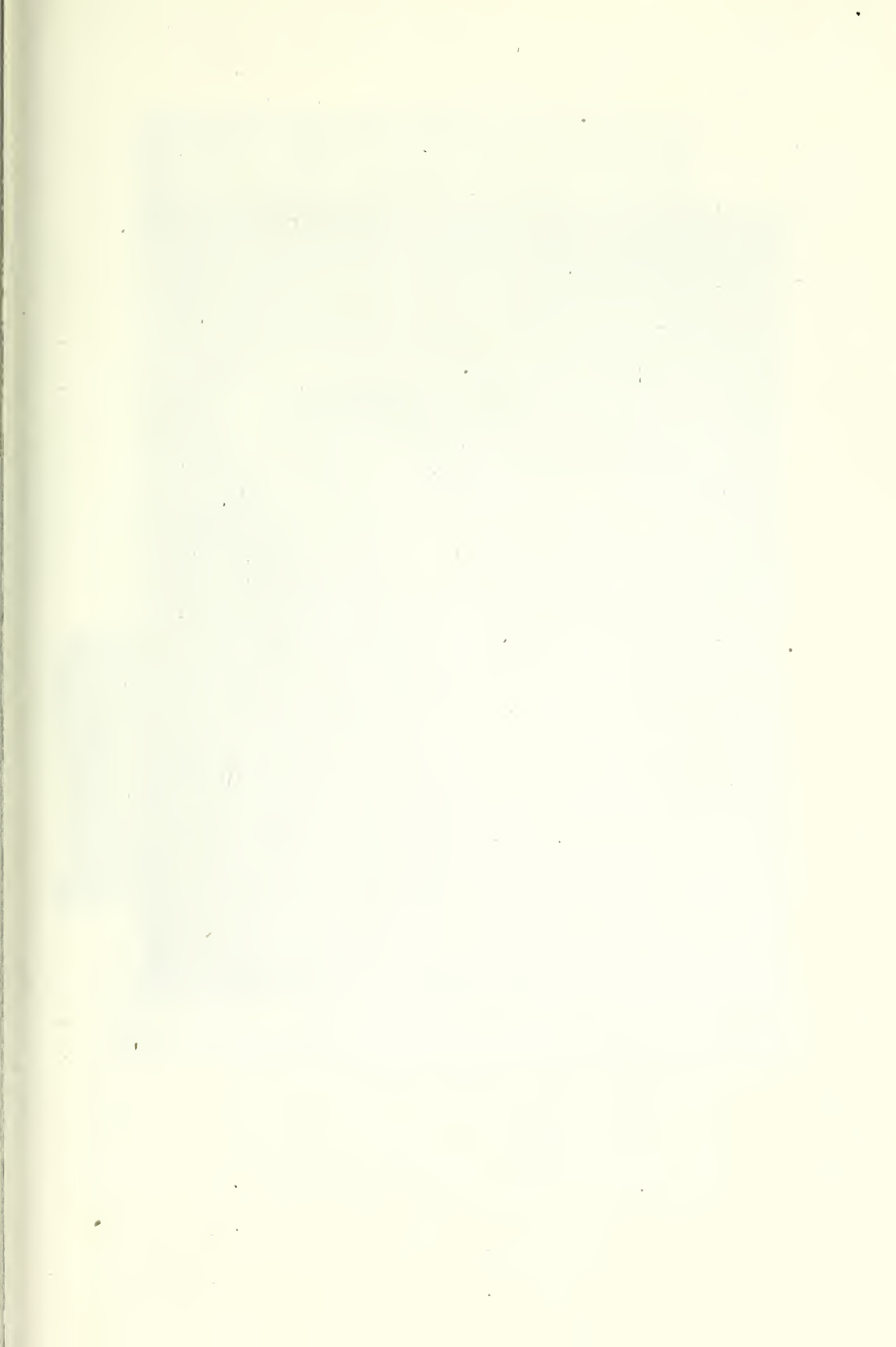
Drawing Water (a pastel).

Shepherdess (a drawing).

A Hero (a study).

May (a water-colour drawing).

Shearing (a drawing).

At the Tether (a drawing).

MORBELLI. - Cleopatra.

ANGELO MORBELLI.

This artist was born in summer 1853 of a family in easy circumstances; at the age of eight he went through severe illness, typhus and scarlatina, recovering with great difficulty and not completely, and his hearing, which remained impaired, has gradually become worse.

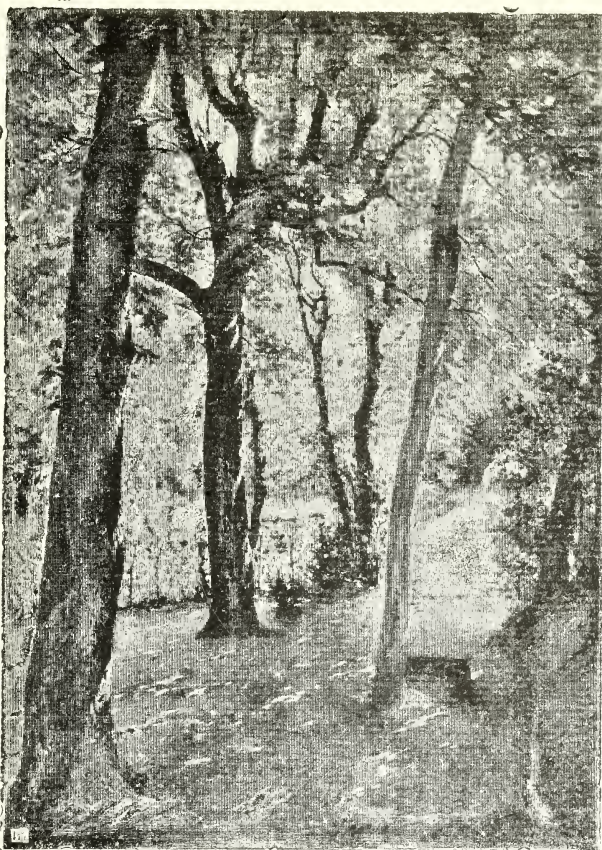
Having reached the age of fourteen, a family council discussed the choice of a career for the youth, whose natural inclination tended towards music, but whose infirmity now unhappily rendered this an impossibility. An old medical adviser was of opinion that the artistic tendency of the youth should not be neglected, but be directed in a suitable course; the Doctor made the proposal that he should study paint-

ing, adding that his own long experience, permitted him to foretell that this defect of hearing, far from being a disadvantage, would cause the youth to be more concentrated and devoted to the study of Art and thus ensure him a brilliant future not wanting in well-deserved rewards.

In fact, in 1867 he frequented the Academy in Milan and passed the various classes, leaving in 1878, after obtaining the usual academical rewards and medals, which never fail to come to any one, even if only endowed with diligence and good-will.

Having, however, become master of his own actions, instead of following the artistic currents of his companions, he began to express, as best he could, his own ideas. *Intemperance* is the first of such attempts; then, gradually, always concentrated in himself hard-working and solitary — even somewhat melancholy — we see him in his works, which are almost all collected in this Exhibition; at times we see him devoting himself to bettering his *technique*, at others expressing his ideas, his sentiments, his feelings, always sincere and modest, without feigning an ability which he does not possess, yet able in his last works to face — and often even to overcome successfully — the most difficult problems of modern painting, the strong expression of coloured lights and the placing of shades.

Art-students will have the opportunity of noticing how the results of luminousness, obtained by Morbelli, are derived from a personal process of his, the result of long studies of chemistry which induced him adopt a transparent amalgamating agent which,

later on, becomes solid, keeping the particles of colouring matter suspended. Thus he has sometimes attained the desired optical fusion of coloured lights without darkening them by mixing on the palette or having recourse to the disagreeable and gaudy daubs of colour of the pseudo-impressionists.

A. MORBELLI

A Wood (a sketch).

A " Pall-Mall Gazette ., Subject.

MORBELLI - *The* Viaticum (in the Trivulzio charitable Institute in Milan)

MORBELLI - *Daily Chronicle* Felo de se

CATALOGUE.

ANGELO MORBELLI.

Oil-Paintings.

Bowls (Sunday Morning in Lombardy).

Fatal Dawn.

The Choir of the Maggiore Monastery in Milan.

A Wood (a sketch).

The Milan Station.

The End (the Trivulzio Charitable Institute in Milan).

The Viaticum (the Trivulzio Charitable Institute in Milan).

Felo de se.

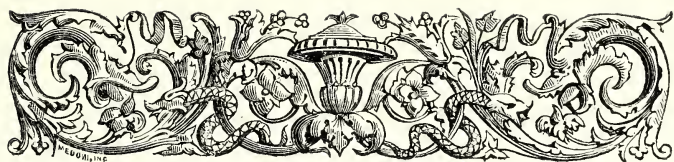
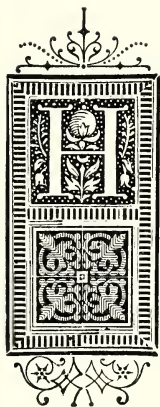
Cow-house in Lombardy.

Intemperance.

Head of an Old Man.

A Stable (a sketch).

Cleopatra.

A « Pall-Mall Gazette » *subject.*

ACHILLE TOMINETTI.

He is forty years of age; born in Milan of humble parents, milksellers, who had come from the mountains of the Lake Maggiore; despite the strong opposition of his father, who wanted him to follow his own trade, Achille Tominetti would devote himself to Art and began by entering the workshop of an engraver on gold, where he passed three years, exercising himself in drawing. His love of painting growing ever stronger, he left the engraver's shop and studied in the Academy. In 1871 his father, having become paralytic, went back to his native mountains to cultivate what little soil he possessed; his son Achille followed him, finding that he could there better satisfy his taste for landscape painting; he continued his studies almost furtively, having to cultivate the soil to help his family.

Gignous, the artist, who frequently went to paint in that neighbourhood, influenced Tominetti's painting for several years, so that, instead of his having a personality of his own, his work bore the reflection of his master's. In 1882 his father died and having since then been able to devote himself freely to study in the solitude of his mountains, the deep feeling of nature began, little by little, to drive from his mind the theories, precepts and methods learned from others, substituting therefore a personal comprehension or vision, which was not long in finding an artistic expression, of its own; and this expression, without any ostentation of talent, possesses the one dominating note of modest sincerity.

CATALOGUE.

A. TOMINETTI.

Oil-Paintings.

Autumn, Chestnut Trees.

A Dale.

A Rainy day.

Evening.

The Chestnut Harvest.

Returning from the Fields.

Autumn.

Winter at Miazzina (Mountains of the Lake Maggiore).

Various Artists.

D. RANZONI

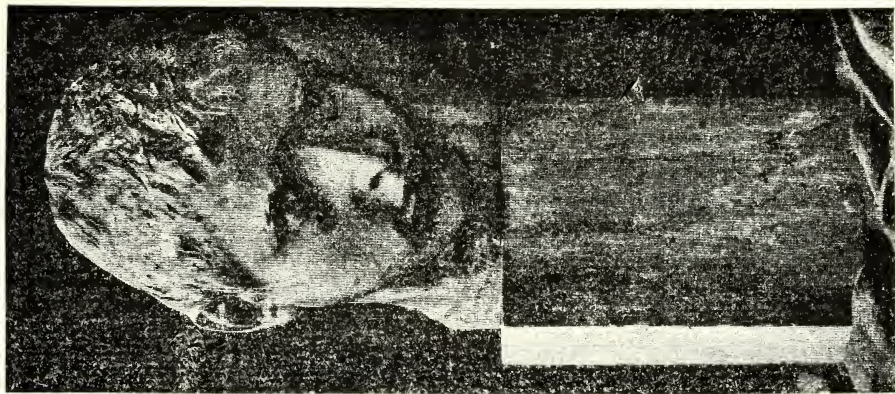
A Portrait.

... Day's work ended.

... (Charitable ...)

E. QUADRELLI

Head of a Man Sleeping (a bronze).

E. QUADRELLI

Head cast and finished by the author (a bronze).

CATALOGUE.

Oil-Paintings.

ATTILIO PUSTERLA.

Soup-Kitchens (Charitable Institute in Milan).

GIOVANNI GIANI.

The Work of the Day ended.

DANIELE RANZONI.

A Portrait.

EMILIO QUADRELLI.

A Bronze, Head cast and finished by the author.

Head of a Man Sleeping.